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# TRAIL & Landscape

A PUBLICATION CONCERNED WITH  
NATURAL HISTORY AND CONSERVATION



THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS'



CLUB  
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Trail & Landscape/Vol. 13, No. 5/pp. 157-184/Ottawa, November-December 1979

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## The Ottawa Field - Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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**Objectives of the Club:** To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

**Club Publications:** THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, devoted to publishing research in natural history; TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a non-technical publication of general interest to local naturalists. THE SHRIKE, a local birding newsletter, is available by separate subscription.

**Field Trips, Lectures** and other natural history activities are arranged for local members. See "Coming Events" in this issue.

**Membership Fees:** Individual (yearly) \$10      Sustaining (yearly) \$25  
Family (yearly) \$12      Life (one payment) \$200

Subscription (libraries or other institutions) \$10 per year (Volume)

### Membership application, correspondence:

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# TRAIL & Landscape<sup>©</sup>

JUL 22 1980

Vol 13 No 5

Published by THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB  
Box 3264 Postal Station C  
Ottawa K1Y 4J5

Editorial Address: 18 Briarcliffe Drive, Ottawa K1J 6E4  
Views expressed in Trail & Landscape are not necessarily those of The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

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## Our Sincere Thanks

We are grateful for the kind assistance to Trail & Landscape staff of the Director of the National Museum of Natural Sciences, Dr. Louis Lemieux, and of his Secretary, Mrs. Dorothea Freeborn. We also thank Allan Reddoch for his hours in the darkroom preparing prints for use in the magazine.

The Editors

---

## Welcome, New Members

### Ottawa Area

Donald E. Anderson  
Lois E. Arkell  
Aaron Bernstein  
Edith E. Dahlschen  
Steve P. Duffield  
Janet Dunbrack  
Kathryn R. Fisher & family  
Lorraine E.D. Fretts & family  
James Lennox  
June McGovern

W. McGuffin & family  
Annette J. Murray  
Maxine V. Oldham  
Susan A. Parisien  
Beverly L. Plato  
Galina Smirnoff  
Rod B. Story  
Mr. and Mrs. R.G. Webb  
Mrs. D.V. Wright

### Other Areas

Anne Linton  
Halifax, N.S.  
David H. Love  
King City, Ont.

P. F. Maycock  
Mississauga, Ont.  
Jeanette K. Nixon  
Yellowknife, N.W.T.

If you know any of our new members, please make them welcome, and when you meet new members, introduce them to others.

September 1979

The Membership Committee

Fran Goodspeed, chairman

*The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is pleased to announce  
the forthcoming publication of*



Autobiography of

## **JOHN MACOUN** Canadian Explorer and Naturalist 1831 - 1920

In celebration of its 100th Anniversary, The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is publishing a second edition of John Macoun's autobiography, improved in many respects, as a tribute to a past president of the Club, an outstanding field naturalist and Canadian explorer.

A self-educated botanist who started his career as a farm hand, Macoun was to become one of Canada's most energetic public servants. As Assistant Director and Naturalist to the Geological Survey of Canada his collections of plants and animals formed the basis for the present day natural history collections of the National Museums of Canada.

### NEW FEATURES OF THE SECOND EDITION

Introduction by Dr. Richard Glover, Professor Emeritus  
Carleton University, author of numerous articles about the  
development of Canada during the fur trade era  
Map showing routes of Macoun's exploratory expeditions  
Editorial notes correct errors in the original, give sources  
of quotations, place Macoun's story in a new perspective  
Biographical essay, an annotated list of information about  
Macoun and publications containing his reports  
Index of over 700 entries  
Dust cover with additional photographs

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN MACOUN, M.A. was first published as a  
memorial volume by The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club in 1922.  
It is long out of print.

We expect AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN MACOUN, edition 2, to be avail-  
able for the general meeting on December 11. Mail orders, see  
page 168.



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# The Centennial Picnic

in snaps by Chris Schwarzkogler



Whoever ordered up the weather for our final Centennial bash certainly did it right. About 80 members assembled at Church Hill to enjoy the sunshine, the natural wealth of Gatineau Park, and each other's company. Five groups converged for lunch and an exchange of accounts of their morning excursions to look at Birds, Rocks, Mosses, Aquatic Beasties, and Whatever (on the General Walk). We found plenty in all categories! And with lunch, a fine view of three Turkey Vultures wheeling overhead.

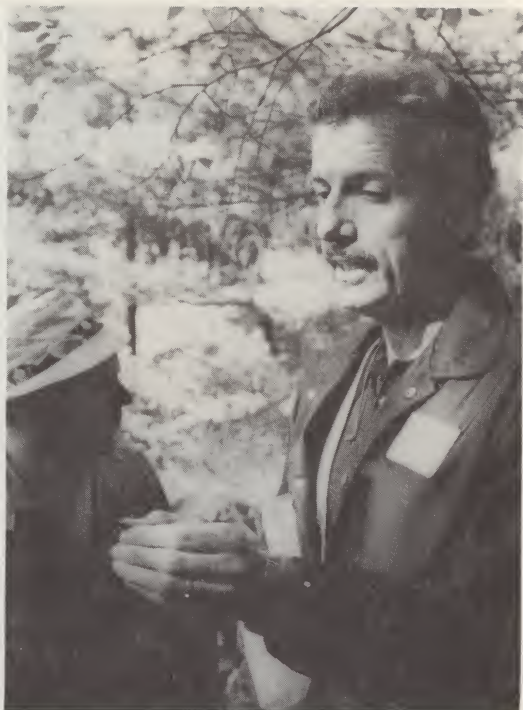
Herewith some candid shots of the proceedings, snapped for T&L by our captive volunteer, who had really just wanted to examine mosses and eat her lunch with the others.

In shady woods by the  
mountain stream, we  
took a close look at  
mosses.





Bob Ireland, of the  
Museum of Natural  
Sciences, intro-  
duces us to  
*Bryum argenteum*.



President Roger Taylor and Janette Dean passed apples and cheese.





Is this one edible?  
Mickie Narraway asks  
of Sheila Thomson.



Here's one that's not!  
Brilliant orange-yellow  
*Amanita muscaria*.



The aquatics group brought their quarry back alive for other naturalists to see -- then released these assorted creepy-crawlies into their native haunts .

A fine co-operative Leopard Frog caught our photographer's eye .







George McGee's General Walk group returned with an armload of Asters and Goldenrods to be sorted, named or argued over while we munched.

\*

\*

\*

We liked this way of rounding off our Centennial celebrations. There were no more speeches, no wallowing in our glorious past. This occasion was just a gentle return to the here and now. It proved that the OFNC is a bunch of naturalists who relate to the outdoors in the proper way -- examine everything, enjoy it, remember it, and leave it be.

The organizers of the Picnic, and of all our Centennial events, are to be congratulated on the fine job they have done of arranging all those many details that added up to a successful celebration. It's been a great year for the OFNC!

AH

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# Summer Birds of 1979



Stephen Gawn

June, July and August in Ottawa cover three phases of the bird's year: the end of spring migration, the breeding season and the first half of fall migration.

Spring Migration Although by the end of May the zenith of spring migration has passed northbound birds are still in evidence until mid June. Arctic Terns, regular June migrants, were seen in the usual small numbers from Britannia. Almost annually rare gulls and jaegers are seen in the first half of June, often with the Arctic Terns. A first year Little Gull was observed from the Britannia filtration plant on June 5 and 6 and a dark Parasitic Jaeger from the Kitchissippi overlook on June 14.

Many shorebirds, namely Lesser Yellowlegs, Semipalmated Plovers, White-rumped, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers and some small forest birds, Blackpoll Warbler the most obvious, passed through Ottawa during the first two weeks of June.

Breeding Season We do not yet have a complete picture of the many species of birds breeding in the Ottawa region. Two Goshawk nests produced a total of four young. Wilson's Phalaropes were suspected of nesting near Green Creek and Winchester. Seven Great Horned Owl nests were kept under observation but only two young were banded. A pair of Mockingbirds successfully nested in the Pinecrest area raising three young and another bird was observed along Spratt Road. Ottawa is a stronghold of the Loggerhead Shrike; eight nests produced 24 fledglings. Golden-winged Warblers continue to thrive in the Gatineau Hills. The Yellow-throated Vireo is rare in Ottawa and a nest in the Gatineau is of great interest. The Cardinals near Woodroffe were suspected to have bred.

Fall Migration Fall migration starts early in July with the arrival of the first southbound shorebirds from the Arctic. High water levels discouraged many shorebirds from landing in the region. A Whimbrel on July 26, Stilt Sandpiper on July 31 and a Red Phalarope on August 31 were the rarest shorebirds



of the period. Several Baird's Sandpipers, a species uncommon in Ottawa, were observed in the east end in late August. For some years now the Canadian Wildlife Service has been banding and colour-dyeing shorebirds on James Bay. Several yellow-orange colour-dyed Semipalmated Sandpipers were observed in August. A Caspian Tern rested on the Ottawa beach mudflat on July 22. A Merlin seen on August 28 at Lac LaPêche was probably a migrant.

Passerine migration starts late in July. By the end of August the first of our breeding species have departed. Early signs are the flocking of Bobolinks, blackbirds, swallows and Starlings. As August progresses the migrants become more and more numerous and by month's end migration is in full swing. Rareties included a Prairie Warbler in the Gatineau on August 26 and an immature Connecticut Warbler in Vincent Massey Park on August 28 and 29. There seemed to be more Olive-sided Flycatchers in migration than usual.

Nonconformists As is often the case some birds seen during the three months do not fit into any regular category. A nonbreeding Double-crested Cormorant spent the summer between Britannia and Lemieux Island. An immature Barrow's Goldeneye on July 1 and 2 was a first summer record as was a male Oldsquaw present from July 1 to 22. Both birds arrived at the Munster Hamlet sewage lagoon on the same day, and since they both breed in northern Labrador they may have been travelling companions. A Pectoral Sandpiper was recorded at Green Creek on June 23. These birds have usually passed through Ottawa by May 31 and normally don't reappear until mid July. What this bird was doing in Ottawa at this time of year is difficult to explain. A Sandhill Crane flew by Shirley's Bay on August 5 suggesting that perhaps cranes once again summered in the region. A late Glaucous Gull remained to June 5. A flock of three White-winged Crossbills, one of the 'northern finches' put in a rare summer appearance on August 16. Turkey Vultures were seen in good numbers; perhaps they are continuing their range expansion.

---

THE OTTAWA DUCK CLUB

presents

## Wildlife Art Show & Sale

painting - carving - books

Saturday 24 November 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Sunday 25 November 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

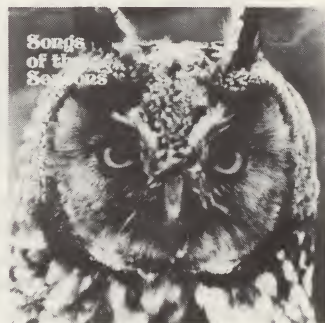
at the Nepean Sportsplex

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# OFNC Christmas Gift Suggestions

OFNC Centennial items make great CHRISTMAS gifts - pick them up at monthly meetings in time for the holiday season.

STEREO RECORD *Songs of the Seasons* featuring sounds of nature in Ottawa, a 45-minute LP album of recordings made by Monty Brigham



OFNC LOGO PIN featuring William Rath's design, a Great Horned Owl in enamel on copper, with either pin-fastening or clutch-fastening.

HASTINOTES featuring Ellaine Dickson's pen and ink drawing of a Great Horned Owl, in packets of one dozen.

New Ottawa BIRD CHECK LIST featuring "bar-graphs" of the frequency of occurrence of each species throughout the year.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Prov. Sales Tax</u>	<u>Mailing &amp; Handling Charge</u> (on mail orders only)
Stereo Record	\$7.94	\$0.56	\$1.25
Logo Pin	\$2.80	\$0.20	\$0.75
Hastinotes (12)	\$2.80	\$0.20	\$0.75
Check List	\$0.25	---	\$0.50 per order*

\*not required if ordered with Record

All these items will be available for purchase at the OFNC monthly meetings on Tuesday November 13 and Tuesday December 11. Alternatively they may be purchased from Lois Cody, 1189 Tara Drive near Maitland Ave. (225-3190) or Anne Taylor, 2147 Quinn Cres. in Alta Vista (731-9270).

For mail orders please include the mailing and handling charge and send cheque or money order payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, P.O. Box 3264, Station C, Ottawa, K1Y 4J5. Ontario residents must also include Provincial sales tax. For Logo Pins please specify the type of fastening desired.



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# Macoun What's What - Canoe Trip '79

Jean McAllister

The Macoun canoe trip 1979 took place over a nine-day stretch beginning on August 26, at Parc provincial de la Vérendrye. The eighteen Macouners were split into two separate groups, one led by Arnet Sheppard, the other by Harry Pokrywa, making small parties of five canoes each.

The drop-off point was some twenty miles north of Le Domaine along the 117, at Lac Larouche. We loaded the canoes and departed, shortly after which we divided into the two groups. Both groups were to follow the same route, a sixty-three mile loop designed to end up once more on the 117, ten miles from Le Domaine. The route passed through a variety of different habitats, from open marshes, to winding streams, to large lakes. From Lac Larouche we passed through a series of small streams and lakes into Lac Nizard, then into Grand Lac. At the end of Grand Lac, there was a dam built over an esker formed by a glacier. The esker extended for some two miles perpendicular to our course. We then passed into Lac Nishcotea, then Lac Nicolas, followed by two long portages. The portages are some of the better areas for studying natural history, and this year a variety of interesting orchids, mushrooms and ferns were found. After another series of small lakes, we passed through the very large Lac Byrd\* where favourable winds made sailing possible. Unfortunately, access to this lake and the next large lake, Lac Poultier, was open to motor-boats. The last lap of the trip was along Rivière des Rapids, which included several small sets of rapids.

Although we didn't see any large mammals, there was much sign of moose, deer, black bear, wolf, and a fox den was seen. Amongst the many small mammals seen was an elusive flying squirrel.

A large number of birds was seen, some of the more interesting being two flocks of thirty to forty flightless Common Mergansers, as well as Boreal Chickadees, whiskyjacks, and a Solitary Sandpiper. The most interesting was a pair of Northern Phalaropes.

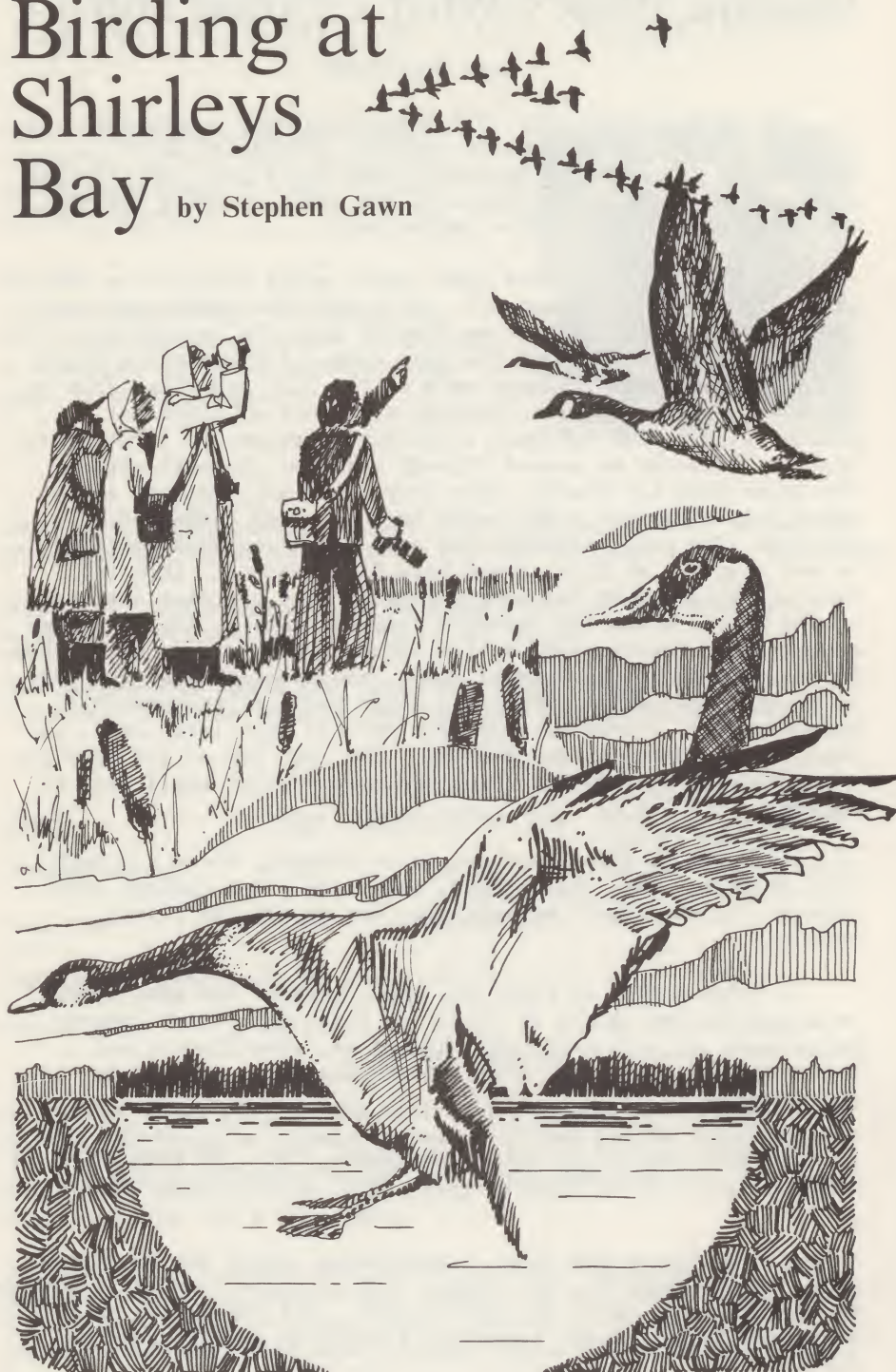
Everyone agreed it was a successful trip. We were sorry to leave, but all footsteps return to where they've been before.

\* At a campsite on the lake, a vegetation survey was conducted under Arnet Sheppard. The survey site extended from the lakeshore to some distance above the water level. All vegetation in a series of 5-foot square plots was identified and recorded for further study.

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# Birding at Shirleys Bay

by Stephen Gawn





Shirleys Bay has long been recognized as one of the best birding spots, if not *the* best, in the Ottawa area. Located on the Ottawa River west of Ottawa, it forms a broad, mostly shallow area at the mouths of Shirleys Brook and Watts Creek. This sheltered bay offers a wide diversity of habitats, including mud flats, cattail and sedge shallows, and open water of moderate depths.

Chartrand and Haycock Islands at the entrance to the bay have been linked to the southern shore by a dike, forming an almost complete barrier separating the bay from the river. This dike provides the best vantage point of both the bay and the open river and has been the most extensively visited spot on the bay.

To get to Shirleys Bay, take Highway 17b (the extension of Carling Avenue) west; drive 2.4 km past the Moodie Drive junction. There will be a road on the right marked with a sign for the Connaught Rifle Ranges. Follow this road to the Ottawa River shore, and Shirleys Bay will be to the left.

Over 260\* of the 322 bird species recorded in the Ottawa District\*\* have been observed around the bay. No other area location has recorded as many. The following paragraphs provide a very brief picture of some of the birds.

Waterfowl are perhaps Shirleys Bay's main attraction. Canada Geese stage in large numbers, with the odd Snow Goose among them, and once a White-fronted Goose, which is very rare in Ottawa. Ducks flock in the bay's shallow water where they can feed and rest safely. A total of 22 different species of ducks have been recorded, among them the rare European Wigeon, the only Ottawa record in over 10 years. Some waterbirds, namely loons, grebes, cormorants, scoters, Brant and Oldsquaw, prefer deeper waters and can be seen just outside the bay on the open river. Although most waterfowl use the bay only in migration, some breed in its quiet waters, and a few stay the summer as non-breeders.

Great Blue Herons, Black-crowned Night Herons and both bitterns frequent the marshy areas of the bay, and occasionally Great Egrets and Snowy Egrets have been sighted. Four species of rails, shy marsh-loving birds, breed in Shirleys Bay, and a fifth, the King Rail, has been recorded.

Predators are vital in the balance of nature to keep numbers of the more common species in check, usually by taking the sick or injured. Bald Eagles and Golden Eagles, both on the Ontario

\* records of Stephen O'Donnell and the author

\*\* The Ottawa District is the area encompassed by a circle of 30 miles (or 50 km) radius centered on the Parliament Buildings.

Government's endangered species list, are sometimes spotted at Shirleys Bay. Occasionally a Bald Eagle will remain for several weeks. The Peregrine Falcon (listed as endangered by the Ontario Government and the Committee on Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) has also been seen at Shirleys Bay. A further 13 species of raptors also occur at the bay, chiefly as migrants.

Shorebirds, comprising plovers, sandpipers and phalaropes, frequent the bay. With the lowering of the Ottawa River each fall, silt which is deposited by Watts Creek is exposed and provides an excellent source of food for shorebirds. At least 28 species of shorebirds have been recorded; among them is the threatened Piping Plover. Although a majority of the shorebirds nest in the Arctic, a few do breed at the bay. Eight species of gulls and 5 species of terns, including the rare Caspian Tern, have been recorded there.

Great Horned Owls have nested in the woods, and Snowy Owls and Short-eared Owls can occasionally be seen on the dike. All manner of small woodland birds, such as woodpeckers, flycatchers, thrushes, vireos, warblers and sparrows (with each of these families consisting on numerous species) breed in the woods on the two islands and all around the bay. During migration, not only are local numbers greatly increased, but many additional species can be seen.

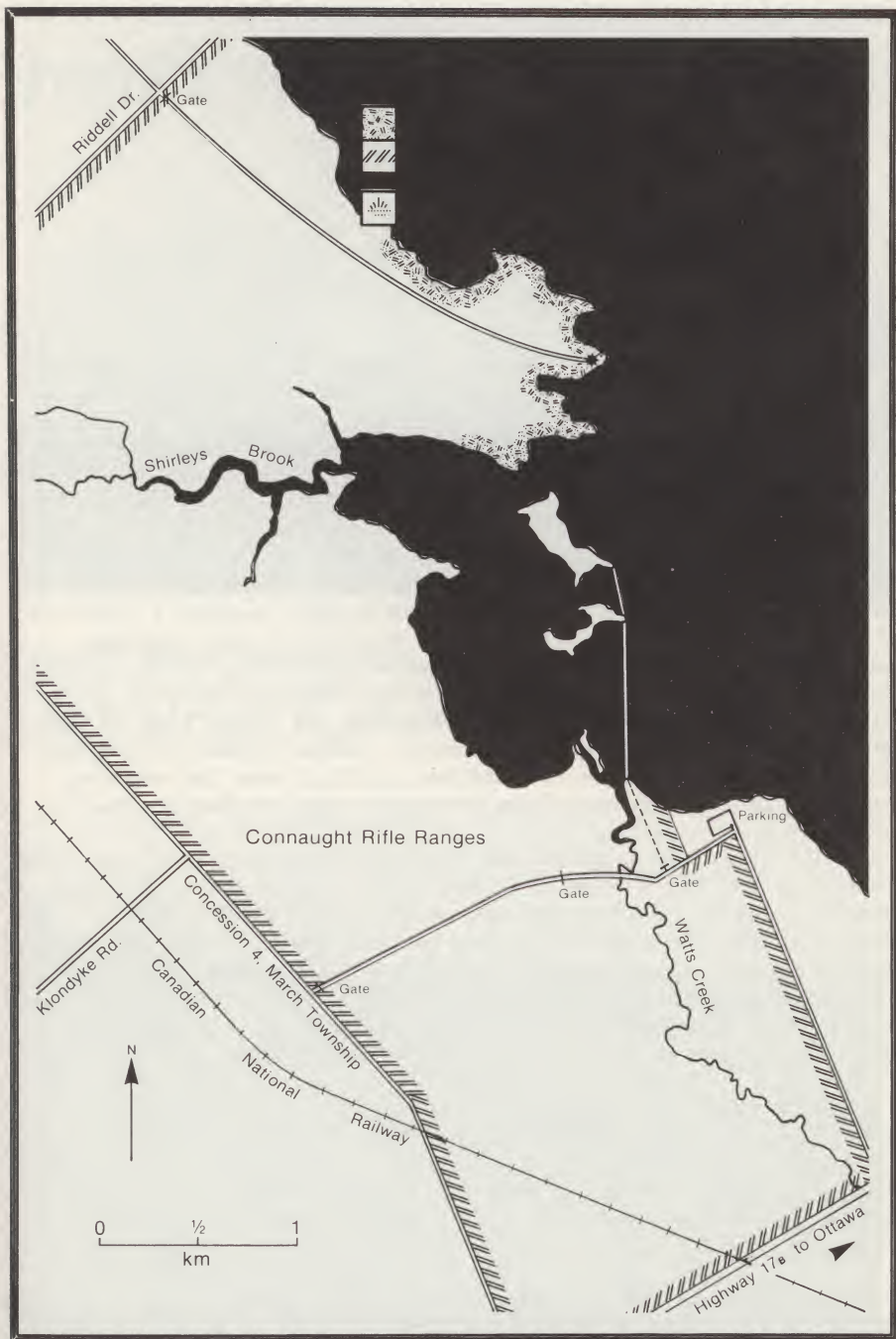
Shirleys Bay's importance is twofold: it is a breeding area for over 100 species of birds\*, and, secondly, and probably more importantly, it is a migration focal point. The biological interest of Shirleys Bay is well illustrated by the number of rare and extralimital birds which turn up.

Shirleys Bay is in a Ministry of Natural Resources Crown Game Preserve. The preserve is bordered by the Ottawa River, Riddell Drive, March Township Fourth Concession, and the Department of National Defence Connaught Rifle Ranges. The only access to the dike is through Department of National Defence property. The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club has made an arrangement with the Department of National Defence to lead bird walks into this restricted zone.

Is this important area adequately safe-guarded? The answer at present is yes. Since it is a game preserve, no hunting or trapping is allowed, and its closeness to the rifle ranges precludes much human disturbance. However, things could change. The National Capital Commission is considering setting up a major recreational park in the vicinity, and there is always the chance that the ranges might close. If either one of these should happen, Club members must make sure that the great natural value of Shirleys Bay is not affected.

\* records of Stephen O'Donnell and the author





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# The Flora of Innis Point

David J. White

Innis Point forms the northern boundary of Shirleys Bay. Along the shoreline is a meadow habitat scattered with small shrubs and a few young trees. Although it is only several acres in extent, the flora found there is quite interesting and unusual. Beds of rather flat limestone of the Oxford formation underlie this meadow and slope gently towards the river. This makes it very prone to ice push-up damage in the winter and spring which, along with the spring flooding, has kept trees from reaching any significant size. The result is the open meadow which now exists.

Some of the plants which occur there are quite rare in the Region. Round-headed Bush-clover, for example, occurs only in the Innis Point - Shirleys Bay area. The next nearest location is some 100 miles distant. Just this summer, during a visit to the area by botanists attending the meeting of the Canadian Botanical Association held at Carleton University, *Sedum sexangulare*, an escape from cultivation, was found to be well established on parts of the point. This was the first time it had been recorded in the Ottawa District. Sweet Grass, a fragrant grass which was used by the Indians of this area for weaving baskets, is to be found along the upper edge of the meadow.

Mid summer is a good time to visit Innis Point to see such plants as Shrubby Cinquefoil, Kalm's St. John's-wort, Shining Ladies'-tresses, Border Meadow-rue and Round-headed Bush-clover. Few of these plants would be encountered elsewhere in the Region except around Shirleys Bay. In addition to having interesting plants, the point has scenic beauty as well. It is located along an attractive section of the Ottawa River with a large expanse of water and the Gatineau Hills as a backdrop.

Unfortunately for visitors, access to this area is quite restricted. One must write to the Department of National Defense, the owners of the property, for permission to visit the area. However, the Department has always granted access to me and to other members of the Conservation Committee when we have written.

Once you have opened the gate at the end of Riddell Drive, proceed to the National Research Council Solar Observatory. A short walk along the shoreline brings you to the meadow habitat as shown on the map on the preceding page. If there were sufficient interest, perhaps a trip to visit the area could be arranged as part of next summer's excursions program. The last Club outing there was almost 10 years ago.





*SHORELINE MEADOW HABITAT ABOVE INNIS POINT - JUNE 27, 1978  
Behind Allan Reddoch (left) and David White is the storm  
cloud which produced the tornado which devastated parts of  
the Buckingham-Masson area.*



*INNIS POINT, showing the limestone bedrock of the Oxford forma-  
tion* photos by Joyce Reddoch

RARE AND UNCOMMON  
PLANTS OF INNIS POINT

*Common Name*

*Scientific Name*

Rare in Ontario and in Canada (Argus and White 1977)

Tubercled Orchid	<i>Platanthera flava</i>
Shining Ladies'-tresses	<i>Spiranthes lucida</i>
Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>
Ensheathed Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus vaginiflorus</i>

Rare in Ottawa-Carleton #

Kalm's St. John's-wort	<i>Hypericum kalmianum</i>
Round-headed Bush Clover	<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>
Kalm's Lobelia	<i>Lobelia kalmi</i>
Shrubby Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>
Mountain-mint	<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>
Meadow Spikemoss	<i>Selaginella apoda</i>
Border Meadow-rue	<i>Thalictrum confine</i>

Sparse in Ottawa-Carleton #

Big Bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
Little Bluestem	<i>Andropogon scoparius</i>
Upland White Aster	<i>Aster ptarmicoides</i>
Golden Corydalis	<i>Corydalis aurea</i>
Sweet Grass	<i>Hierochloa odorata</i>
White Adder's-mouth	<i>Malaxis monophyllos</i>
Nine-bark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>
Seneca Snakeroot	<i>Polygala senega</i>
Indian Grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>

Uncommon in Ottawa-Carleton #

Wood Lily	<i>Lilium philadelphicum</i>
Green Adder's-mouth	<i>Malaxis unifolia</i>
Sandbar Willow	<i>Salix interior</i>
Tall Cord Grass	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>

#status based on Gillett and White 1978 and modified where necessary to reflect the status in Ottawa-Carleton



For permission to enter the Innis Point area, write to Mr. R.G. Warren, Director General, Security and Communications Support Services, Department of Communications, Journal Tower North, 300 Slater St., Ottawa, K1A 0C8. You must then get the key to the gate from the DND Research Establishment gatehouse on Highway 17b past the Connaught Rifle Ranges/Shirleys Bay road.

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Hanes, A. 1970. *The OFNC at Innis Point*. T&L 4(5): 150-151

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## Butterflies in the Innis Point Area

Joyce Reddoch

The Innis Point area, with its diversity of habitats, shows considerable promise of being one of the best places to find butterflies in Ottawa-Carleton, perhaps rivaling even Stony Swamp. On two short visits on June 27 and July 8, 1978, Ross Layberry easily found 25 species, including 6 uncommon or very local ones. He estimated that a season-long study would yield at least 60 of the approximately 90 species to be expected in the Ottawa District. The uncommon or very local species which Ross encountered are Comma (*Polygonia comma*), White Admiral (*Limenitis arthemis*), Coral Hairstreak (*Harkenclenus titus*), Northern Hairstreak (*Satyrrium boreale*), Striped Hairstreak (*S. liparops*) and Bronze Copper (*Lycaena hyllus*).

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Lafontaine, J.D. 1969. *Take Another Look at Hairstreaks*. T&L 3(5): 150

Lafontaine, J.D. 1972. *More Butterflies*. T&L 6(3): 94-95

Layberry, R.A. 1979. personal communication

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# Macoun Field Club

The Macoun Field Club is a young naturalists' club jointly sponsored by the National Museum of Natural Sciences and The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' club. The MFC chairman and leaders have traditionally been associated with the museum, and the OFNC contribute funds and assistance through its Macoun Club Committee. The club was named after John Macoun, a famous Canadian naturalist and botanist.

There are 3 groups within the club; each elects its own officers:  
Juniors, grades 4-6      Intermediates, grades 7-8

Seniors, grades 9-13

Regular weekly meetings are held in the NMNS' activity centre at the Victoria Memorial Museum (Metcalf and McLeod Sts.).

Seniors, Friday, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Intermediates, Saturday, 10:00 to 11:15 a.m.

Juniors, Saturday, 11:15 to 12:15 a.m.

At meetings, talks are given by invited speakers with special knowledge in natural history branches such as minerals, ferns, beetles or arctic mammals. Club members present their own observations as well. Films are sometimes shown and workshops conducted. There is a good collection of specimens in the activity centre, as well as a library of books and magazines.

A club publication, *The Little Bear*, is produced once a year, with drawings, reports and articles written by members. They also produce a monthly newsletter.

Regular field trips are conducted, often led by experts who have given the group a talk, or sometimes by leaders amongst the members.

There are no dues. Small voluntary expenses may be incurred by senior members for special field trips.

For information

Information Centre,  
National Museum of Natural Sciences,  
Metcalf and McLeod Sts.,  
Ottawa, Ontario. K1A 0M8  
996-3102

The Ottawa Field-  
Naturalists' Club  
722-3050



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## DO YOU LIKE KIDS AND NATURE, AND WANT TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR THE FUTURE?

Join the Macoun Club Committee and spend some time helping our young naturalists learn about their environment.

Since 1948, the Macoun Field Club has drawn leadership from the National Museum and The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. Arnet Sheppard of the Canadian Nature Federation and Greg Whalen of the Museum's Palaeobiology Division are running the three sections of Macoun Club for 1979-80. *How about giving them a hand?* We need someone to work with the juniors, an enthusiastic bunch with a growing interest but limited knowledge. Or with the seniors - high school students, some with considerable knowledge but with a need for direction and encouragement in their endeavours. It is certainly a rewarding job:

Bill Baldwin, 1958: "However it may be with us, we think happily of our companionship in natural history which started in the Macoun Field Club."

Pierre Taschereau, 1972: "The inspiration of youth with worthwhile interests, goals and ideals, in time brings its own rewards. It needs and expects no special mention or thanks."

Irwin Brodo, 1973: "It is a widely known fact that many Macoun Club 'graduates' have gone on to bigger and better things, both in biology and other fields. Of course we like to think the club had something to do with their successes...."

Paul Hamilton (editor of Macoun Club's annual), 1975: "The club has given me an insight into natural history which no school could ever give; I treasure my experiences..."

Matt Fairbarns (Senior President), 1974: "...the Macoun Club helped me and many others to gain a fuller appreciation of the natural world we keep destroying. Realizing the ties between different plants and animals, we have got ourselves involved in many efforts to study and to save them. In doing so, a few of us have completely changed our outlook on life, and we all have been affected."

If you can offer some time to the MFC or want to know more about possible involvement, contact:

Arnet Sheppard at 238-6154

David Gray at 998-4141 or 821-2640

# Range Extension of the Ribbon Snake in Ontario



Terry N. Tobias  
Envirocon Ltd., Toronto, Ont.

Rob R. Evans  
The Proctor and Redfern Group, Toronto, Ont.

During site studies associated with the possible siting of an Ontario Hydro Generating Station at Chats Falls on the Ottawa River, a population of the Northern Ribbon Snake, *Thamnophis sauritus septentrionalis*, was discovered in April 1978 by the authors on the eastern portion of Morris Island. Morris Island is located immediately west of Fitzroy Harbour (latitude  $45^{\circ}28'$ ) West Carleton Township, Ottawa-Carleton Region, Ontario. This locale on the Ottawa River is the northeasternmost station for the species in the province (Conant 1975) and is only the second site where the snake is known to occur in the Ottawa Region (Cook 1968). The fact that this range extension lies within the Ottawa district, one of the better-researched areas in Canada, is significant (F.R. Cook, personal communication) and indicates perhaps that much herpetological field research needs to be done.

The following brief account of a few of the known stations in this portion of the species' range is included to help put the significance of this range extension into context, as well as to dispel the ambiguity surrounding some of the previously published data. Bleakney (1958) showed the northernmost stations in Ontario as being near Georgian Bay and Pakenham. The former sight record is from Torrance (latitude  $45^{\circ}00'$ ), Muskoka District (Logier and Toner 1961); the latter is from the "Horseback Hills" region (Pakenham Mountains, latitude  $45^{\circ}19'$ ) just west of Pakenham, Pakenham Township, Lanark County (Cook 1968). The collection site in "Horseback Hills" is 1.15 km W and 0.37 km N of Pakenham (F.R. Cook, personal communication) which is 16.5 km SSW of Fitzroy Harbour. There is one sight record (in 1962) for the species at Stratton Lake (latitude  $45^{\circ}51'$ ), Algonquin Provincial Park (M.N.R. 1976). The new station reported in this note is near the easternmost limit of the Ontario range. Woods and Cook (1976) have recorded the easternmost station as being Mallorytown Landing (longitude  $75^{\circ}53'$ ), St. Lawrence Islands National Park, Leeds County. Fitzroy Harbour is longitudinally located at  $76^{\circ}13'$ , about 25 km west of Mallorytown Landing.



The Ribbon Snake is semi-aquatic and is seldom found far from water (Conant 1975). The study site is characterized by numerous intermittent ponds and the nine specimens that were observed from April to July were all seen in close proximity to such ponds. Seven of these were seen on open transmission corridors and three of these individuals were seen simultaneously in a very small pocket of cattail (*Typha sp*) marsh. No intensive searches for the reptile were undertaken. One adult female has been deposited in the National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa, as 18099.

The Ribbon Snake can be easily confused with the Eastern Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*) in the field, especially in eastern Ontario where the Garter Snake is similarly coloured. The following description, drawn from Cook (1968) and Conant (1975: Field Guide), may aid in identification. The record length is 96.5 cm but examples over 60 cm are uncommon. These are mostly slender snakes with exceptionally long tails, more than 1/4 the body length. The ground colour is dark, usually black, and there are three prominent longitudinal yellow stripes as in the Eastern Garter Snake. However, the lateral stripe of the Ribbon Snake is on the third and fourth scale rows on the forepart of the body. (It's on the second and third on the Eastern Garter Snake.) There is a chocolate band below the lateral stripe. The demarkation between stripes and ground colour is much sharper than in Garter Snakes. The underside is yellowish or greenish and the dorsal scales are keeled and arranged in 19-19-17 rows, as in the Eastern Garter Snake.

The authors thank F.R. Cook, Curator of Herpetology, National Museum of Natural Sciences, for access to unpublished data, and for criticizing an early version of the manuscript, and Mr. W.F. Weller, Department of Zoology, Erindale College, University of Toronto for criticizing a later draft of the ms. Thanks also to Ontario Hydro for permission to publish their data.

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*At the National Museum of Natural Sciences.....*

### "Living Plants - A Showcase"

See the many living specimens that will form part of the new Plant Life gallery - 4th floor east.

### "Plantae Occidentalis: 200 Years of Botanical Art in British Columbia"

Containing over 100 works, this travelling exhibit from the Vancouver Botanical Garden traces the development of botanical and floral illustration in British Columbia - from October 2 to November 18 in the Temporary Exhibits Gallery - 3rd floor east.

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### Correction:

Although George McGee has worked in many different ways for the Club, editing the Club Newsletter wasn't one of them, contrary to what was stated on page 150 of the last issue. No one remembers just who was the editor in the 1960's and he is not named, but some people think it may have been Hugh Schultz. Hugh has done so much for the Club and for other organizations that he can't remember either!

JMR

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## OFNC Late Fall Program

arranged by the Excursions and Lectures Committee  
Charlie Beddoe (733-9026), Chairman

All times stated for excursions and walks are departure or starting times. Please plan to arrive 15 minutes early to avoid being left behind; leaders are instructed to start promptly. Members arriving by bus at meeting places for excursions can usually find rides with other members going by car. (Mention to the leader that you need a ride if none has been offered.)

Thursday  
8 November

### TOUR OF CANADIAN NATIONAL INSECT COLLECTION

Meet: The Neatby Building, Central  
Experimental Farm

Time: 2:30 p.m.

This is an excellent opportunity for OFNC members to spend an afternoon touring the Canadian National Insect Collection which is maintained as a research collection at the Central Experimental Farm. All members wishing to participate should phone Janette Dean at 728-0695 for further information.

Tuesday  
13 November

### OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

#### A NATURE/PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR TO THE ARCTIC LOWLANDS

Speakers: Fran Goodspeed and Norma Johnson

Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural  
Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

Time: 8 p.m.

An illustrated report on a 'Canadian Nature Tour' taken under the auspices of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists to Churchill on Hudson's Bay and to Baker Lake on the inland tundra. Expect excellent photographic content!

Saturday  
17 November

### WINTER TWIG WALK

Leader: Jim Wickware (832-3398)

Meet: outside Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's  
Pasture, far north end of Holland Avenue

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Destination is the Y Camp at Dunrobin for a walk lasting about 1½ hours to look at trees under winter conditions. A warm fire and refreshments will be available at the end of the excursion.

cont'd...



Tuesday  
11 December

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING  
LIFE OF THE IVORY GULL

Speaker: Stuart MacDonald

Curator of Vertebrate Ethology,  
National Museum of Natural Sciences

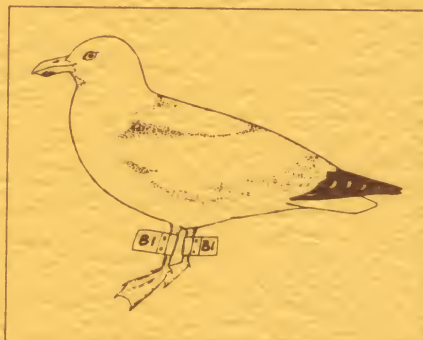
Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural  
Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

Time: 8 p.m.

Since 1974 Stuart MacDonald has made an all seasons study of the life history of the Ivory Gulls nesting on Seymour Island in the High Arctic, and has discovered another colony on an ice cap of Ellesmere Island. He is renowned for his skilled use of photography in his research. This illustrated talk should not be missed!

## LOOK OUT FOR MARKED HERRING GULLS

Great Lakes Herring Gulls have been marked with numbered and lettered green, orange, blue or pink leg ribbons - one on each leg. If you see any Herring Gulls so marked, please note number, letter and colour of each ribbon, and date and place of sighting. Contact Dr. D.V. Chip Weseloh or Mr. Pierre Minéau, Canadian Wildlife Service, Box 5050, Burlington, Ontario, L7R 4A6, or telephone (416) 637-4264.



I'LL GET IT RIGHT YET! Francis Cook says that the correct name of the Eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle featured on the recent stamp in the endangered wildlife series (page 121 of the last issue) is *Trionyx spiniferus*.

JMR

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DEADLINE: January issue material to Editor (Joyce Reddoch) by November 3, please!

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ISSN 0041-0748

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

published by

THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

Second Class Mail - Registration Number 2777  
Postage paid in cash at Ottawa

Change of Address Notices and undeliverable Copies:  
Box 3264 Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ont.

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